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WASHINGTON (JTA) -- Nine Congress members are seeking an investigation into the financial ties between the new National Intelligence Council chairman and Saudi Arabia.

The two highest-ranking Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives, Minority Leader John Boehner of Ohio and Minority Whip Eric Cantor of Virginia, were among those who signed a letter to the inspector general for the Office of the Director of National Intelligence seeking a probe of Charles "Chas" Freeman's past and current relationship with Saudi Arabia.

Rep. Mark Kirk (R-Ill.) organized the letter, which asks for a probe of "both personal financial disclosures and the list of all contributors to the Middle East Policy Council across all years that Amb. Freeman drew a salary from the foundation -- and report back to Congress on any potential conflicts of interest."

Nevada Rep. Shelley Berkley was the sole Democrat to sign the missive.

Nonprofit organizations such as the Middle East Policy Council are not required to publicly disclose their contributors. Freeman, a former U.S. ambassador to Saudi Arabia, served as the council's chairman since 1997 and said in 2006 that the organization had received a \$1 million donation from Saudi King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz.

Freeman defended Saudi Arabia in the wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks after the revelation that 15 of the 19 attackers were Saudis. He also has been critical of Israel and blamed the Jewish state for the failure of peace talks.

The Kirk letter follows by three days a similar letter sent to the inspector general by Rep. Steve Israel (D-N.Y.), a member of the House Select Intelligence Oversight Panel, asking for a probe into Freeman's relationship with the Saudi government.